

MEDIA RELEASE

**Attention: News Director
For Immediate Release
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
DAVID L. HUBER
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
Western District of Kentucky**

**Contact: David L. Huber
United States Attorney
(502) 582-5911**

**SIMPSON COUNTY MAN SENTENCED ON
METHAMPHETAMINE AND FIREARMS CHARGES**

David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, and Paul Vido, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Louisville Field Division, jointly announced today that **STEVEN RAY HEDGECOUGH**, age 34, of 545 Humphrey Road, Franklin, Kentucky, in Simpson County, **was sentenced** today in United States District Court. **Hedgecough** was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment and 4 years supervised release, after having previously entered a guilty plea to attempting to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine, and to possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

This is a **Project Backfire** prosecution. **Project Backfire** is a partnership of state and federal law enforcement which targets violent offenders for prosecution to the fullest extent of state and federal law.

Hedgecough was indicted on September 7, 2005, after being arrested by agents of the South Central Kentucky Drug Task Force on April 10, 2005, at his residence, where the agents found him engaged in the manufacture of methamphetamine. Although the manufacturing process had not been completed, agents estimated that he was engaged in the production of approximately 100 grams when the residence was searched and he was arrested. The retail value of methamphetamine in this area is approximately \$100 per gram.

Hedgecough also pled guilty to possessing a .25 caliber semi-automatic FIE brand pistol

in furtherance of the drug crime. The penalty for possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime is imprisonment for five years to life, to be served consecutively to the penalty for the underlying drug crime, which in this case is a term of imprisonment for not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years, a fine of \$2,000,000, and a term of supervised release of at least four years after the term of imprisonment is served.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Larry Fentress and was investigated by agents of the South Central Kentucky Drug Task Force and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Hedgecough was sentenced by the Honorable Joseph H. McKinley Jr., Judge, United States District Court for the Western District of Kentucky.

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